

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

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SS-20 USIA-15 EB-11 TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00 INT-08

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R 110730Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7332

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BUKAVU

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

AMCONSUL KISANGANI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 3156

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CG, BE

SUBJECT: BELGIAN-ZAIRIAN RELATIONS

1. BELGIAN AMBASSADOR VANDEN BLOOCK TOLD ME APRIL 10 THAT CURRENT POLITICAL TENSION BETWEEN BELGIUM AND ZAIRE HAD NOT AFFECTED ECONOMIC/COMMERICAL RALTIONS OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. HE CONFIRMED SGM NEGOTIATIONS WITH GOZ FOR NEW ZAIRIAN COPPER MARKETING ORGANIZATION (WITH SOME TECHNICAL HELP FROM SGM) HAD GONE WELL AND THAT AGREEMENT NOW AWAITING MOBUTU'S SIGNATURE. HE CONFIRMED SGM STILL PLANNING TO GO AHEAD WITH CONSTRUCTION OF LARGE COPPER REFINERY IN BAS ZAIRE.

2. ON THE PLITICAL LEVEL, VANDEN BLOOCK SAID MOBUTU HAD INTERDICTED ANY OFFICIAL CONTACT WITH ANY MEMBER OF BELGIAN EMBASSY. HE HAD UNDERSTOOD THAT HE, HIMSELF, WOULD BE ALLOWED OUT OF QUARANTINE ONCE ASSURANCES GIVEN HE BEING TRASFERRED IN LATE MAY. UNFORTUATELY, CHOME AFFAIR HAD INTERVENED. IN ADDITION, MOBUTU HAD MADE
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IT CLEAR HE INTERESTED ONLY IN TALKING TO NEW BELGIAN

GOVT, NOT CARETAKER.

3. VANDEN BLOOCK RUEFULLY NOTED GOB'S INABILITY, UNLKIKE FRANCE, TO BAN CHOME'S BOOK. HE OBSERVED THIS WOULD BE FIRST ISSUE IN GOB-GOZ RELATIONS NEW BELGIAN GOVT WOULD HAVE TO FACE. VANDEN BLOOCK DETECTS SENTIMENT IN PRESIDENCY THAT BELGIUM IS TOO SMALL A COUNTRY FOR ZAIRE TO ENTERTAIN SPECIAL RELATIONS WITH. ON THE THER HAND, VANDEN BLOOCK BELIEVES MOBUTU GENUINELY INCENSED OVER CHOME BOOK AND IS NOT USING IT AS PRETEXT TO AVOID DISCUSSION OF EFFECTS OF ZAIRIANIZATION POLICY ON BELGIAN INTERESTS. HE ALSO BELIEVES MUNICH AGREEMENT ON UNION MINIERE COMPENSATION NOT THREATENED.

4. VANDEN BLOOCK SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO GREAT EXODUS OF BELGIANS AS RESULT NOV 30 MEASURES. HE ESTIMATED DEPARTURES AT A "FEW HUNDRED" BUT ADMITTED MORE MIGHT NOT RETURN FROM SUMMER HOLIDAYS IN BELGIUM. HE NOTED ZAIRE STILL NEEDED LARGE NUMBERS OF BELGIANS TO OPERATE ECONOMY ANDHE WAS NOT CONCERNED OVER FUTURE OF BELGIANS WORKING, FOR EXAMPLE, IN GECAMINES.

5. ON CULTURAL ASSISTANCE SIDE, VANDEN BLOOCK CITED CASE OF RECENT EDUCATIONAL TEAM FROM BRUSSELS WHICH WAS RECEIVED IN NORMAL FASHION AT ALL THREE UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES.

6. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT GOB-GOZ POLITICAL RELATIONS ARE ON ICE UNTIL SUCH TIME AS NEW BELGIAN GOVT FORMED AND POSITION FORMULATED ON CHOME'S BOOK. VANDEN BLOOCK NOT INCLINED SEE FRENCH OR ANY OTHER FOREIGN ELEMENT BEHIND BELGIUM'S PRESENT DIFFICULTIES. WHILE NOT HAPPY, HE GAVE IMPRESSION BELGIUM PREPARED TO TOUGH IT OUT IN HOPE OF PLAYING SUBSTANTIAL ROLE IN ZAIRE'S FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

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